

The 2017 AVP-USA National Gathering

May 26 – May 29, 2017

Boston, Massachusetts

www.avpusaconference.org

THAT’S what I’m talkin’ about!

Our Theme, this year, is:

Journey of Change: Transforming Ourselves and our Communities.

AVP brings the tools to transform conflict. If we seriously wish to change the course of things, we must look not only at our adversaries, but at ourselves. That means considering our own role in the conflict: our presuppositions, our prejudices, our triggers, our trauma, our participation in larger systems that created the circumstances of the conflict and ways in which we are actually connected to our adversary. Whether “right” or “wrong”, we still must adapt and grow if we wish to transform conflict in lasting ways. And in changing ourselves, we signal new possibilities for others, as well. But deliberate change requires the courage to enter new and uncomfortable terrain with bold steps into a future yet undecided. To transform our conflicts, let us be open to transforming ourselves and the communities of which we are part.

Who’s on Deck?

Our Speaker:

We are pleased to announce our first keynote speaker, Jean Trounstein, author of *A Boy with A Knife*, and the protagonist in her book, returned citizen and former AVP facilitator, Karter Reed.

Say WHAT??

The Program:

Our program is still in the planning stages. Current tracks include:

- Skill building
- AVP and Restorative Justice
- Going “upstream”: taking AVP to communities where violence happens before prison
- AVP biology: How the brain, the body, and trauma relate to managing anger, to keeping a healthy outlook, and to nonviolence choices.
- Unity, Diversity and Privilege – How do we honor differences in conflict? And how do we diversify our own ranks? Who is marginalized? Who have we excluded? How do we bring in more voices? How do we accommodate and bring in more youth to AVP?

What else?

As we assemble this program, we invite your voice. What interests you right now? Where are your learning edges? How do we grow as a community? What seems too scary to confront? What transformation shall we endeavor together? Contact us with suggestions at Program@AVPUSA.org or at P.O. Box 3036, Acton, MA 01720. A Publication of AVP/USA **9**

Come early and stay late!

We invite you to participate in a wealth of additional programming around the gathering:

Thursday, May 25 – Exploring Diversity

A one-day, pre-conference workshop brought by the Education Committee: Participants will experience learning activities and exercises in the morning, and small groups will discuss how to facilitate this topic and develop agendas in the afternoon. This is preparation for including this topic in the next Advanced manual. The workshop is offered twice, so choose either day to attend.

Thursday May 25, 2017 – Prison day at MCI Norfolk

A day with incarcerated men, seasoned inside facilitators, and administration, at a facility that is striving to lead: Norfolk offers innovative programming including: Restorative Justice, Emotional Awareness (based on the nationally recognized Houses of Healing program), formal debates featuring teams of inmates going against local college debate teams, and, AVP. Join us for a day supporting, learning and celebrating the work going on at this institution.

Friday, May 26, 2017 - Is AVP-USA a Social Justice / Peace Organization?

An open retreat of the Board: Alternatives to Violence Project grew out of strong activist roots, focusing on “finding effective ways to communicate and practice active nonviolence.” (Liveoak: Hoover interview) Ghandi called politics the “art of right action.” AVP’s politics is about not taking sides, but seeking to do the right thing. What is more political than actively working toward self-change of “transformation” of power structures within communities, institutions or systems? Please join a day long planning retreat as we explore: who we are idealistically as an organization, how we act upon our shared beliefs, and identify implications as we move forward organizationally.

Monday, May 29, 2017, 1:00pm-5:00pm - MOVING FORWARD AS AN ORGANIZATION

The AVP-USA Post-Conference Planning Session: In this session we will break into small thematic groups to process insights learned at the gathering. Each group identifies specific action steps for AVP-USA Board and Committees to follow-up in the year ahead.

Meet the future

AVP Youth at the Gathering 2017

Recognizing growing interest in AVP among people under 18 years old, we actively welcome youth to Gathering 2017. We need to hear from you: Are you aware of young AVP-ers who would be interested in attending? Do you like working with high school kids? Would you like to help as a chaperone or with special programming?

Please contact us at youth@avpusa.org, or at P.O. Box 3036, Acton, MA 01720, with questions, suggestions, feedback or interest in helping to bring youth to Gathering 2017.**10** A Publication of AVP/USA

The Crib

Location of the Gathering

This year's national gathering will take place at:

Lasell College 1844 Commonwealth Ave.

Newton, Massachusetts, 02466 ph. 617-243-2000 www.lasell.edu

Lasell College, in Newton, Massachusetts, is just outside of Boston. Lasell offers great class spaces, dormitory rooms with or without air conditioning, a volleyball pit and some fields to play on. It's in a beautiful neighborhood within walking distance to local shops and restaurants and the Charles River.

Directions

AVP-USA will offer limited shuttle service from the airport – take the Massport “Logan Express” bus to the Framingham Terminal. Contact Transport@AVPUSA.org with your travel plans to let us know you'll need a lift. Public transportation is also available. Head to the “Riverside” stop on the “Green line,” which is a few blocks from the campus. Contact us at Transport@avpusa.org to arrange a pickup at the Riverside stop.

Sign me up!

Registration Early bird registration: Feb 15 - March 31, 2017. Regular registration: April 1 – April 30. Late registration: May 1 - May 15.

Registration questions? Please contact Julie Crawford: registrar@avpusa.org, or at P.O. Box 3036, Acton, MA 01720.

Huh?

Questions For other questions that may arise, please send inquiries to at conference@avpusa.org or at P.O. Box 3036, Acton, MA 01720.

On behalf of AVP-Massachusetts and of greater New England,

We're looking forward to seeing you in Boston! *Sincerely,*
Chris Campbell Boston Gathering Committee A Publication of AVP/USA **11**